Alternate Models of Associate Degrees: Action research in the United States

Abstract

The literature suggests that the formation of Community Colleges in the United States recognised that vocational, developmental, community and collegiate educational foundations are interrelated. Traditionally, Community Colleges are accredited to award associate degrees in arts and science that combine general education with technical education. These qualifications are said to bridge the difference between artisan and professional occupations. This paper, on the occasion of the mid level qualifications conference, details examples of innovative frameworks for the delivery and assessment of these mid level qualifications, which fall outside the traditional Community College where an associate degree is two years post secondary qualification. Each of these models aims to promote the self-direction of learners so they can increasingly advocate for themselves. The models described include duel enrolment where students are enrolled both in high school and college simultaneously to either receive college credits or an associate degree upon high school graduation, and pathways to associate degrees through partnerships between labour movement apprenticeships and a college that focuses on non-traditional adult education.

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